

# The Virtual Commons

## Part I The History of Copyright



# A brief history of copyright

- Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers, founded 1403
- William Caxton (1418 – 1492) – moveable type
- Royal Charter, 1557 (Printers' Company)
- Licensing of the Press Act, 1662
- Copyright Act 1709 (Statute of Anne)
- Berne Convention 1886
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988



# A very potted history of copyright

- Industrial revolution
- Led to need for patent laws
- Emerging new formats, led to extension of copyright laws to cover many other creative areas, including music, films, photographs architectural designs, and software.
- Over the years the period of copyright has been extended from 14 years during the charter of the Stationers' Company to 25 years for printed, and 70 years for musical.

# A flakey history of patents

- 1474 Republic of Venice issued a decree that new and inventive devices once in use had to be communicated to the Republic to stop others from using the.
- 1623 Statute of Monopolies provided the inventor of an item exclusive rights to that item for up to 14 years, as a anti-monopoly device.
- In 2005, average cost of a 10-year European patent was €32,000!
- London Agreement (01-05-08) – 13 countries

# The Virtual Commons

## Part II

Where are we now?

# Where are we now?

- Public Domain
- Wikipedia (GFDL)
- Open Sound Projects
- Free Science Licence (?)
- Free Software (GPL)
- Open Source Software

# The Virtual Commons

## Part IIIa The Creative Commons

# Copyright Designs and Patentes Act 1988

- The right to be identified as the author or the director, right which has to be "asserted" at the time of publication
- The right to object to derogatory treatment of work
- The right to object to false attribution of work (up to 25 years after death)
- The right to privacy of certain photographs and films
- Rights are non-transferrable, but pass to heirs





# The Creative Commons



- Built upon existing laws of copyright
- Some rights reserved v all rights reserved
- Helps to educate one as to one's rights and allows one to understand how one is sharing one's work.
- Provides choices with regards with how to license one's work and country-specific legal guidelines.
- <http://creativecommons.org/license/>

# Why did we need CC?

- The RMS Printer Story
- GPL (copyleft)
- Free Software Foundation and Eben Moglan
- GFDL
- CC

And I just couldn't get the #\$\$@!\* printer to bloody well work, so I started a revolution!

